How to Read a Food Label

Serving Size and Servings Per Container

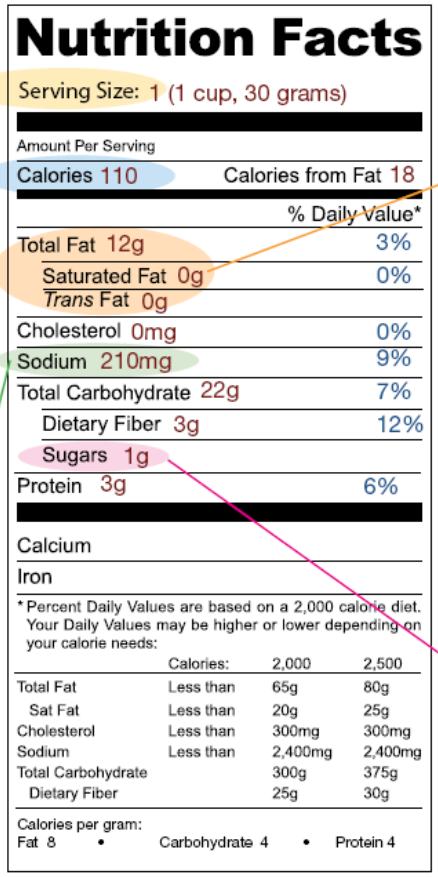
- Look at the serving size and how many servings you are actually eating. If you are eating more than one serving, you need to multiply the calories by the number of servings.

Calories Per Serving

- Low - 40 calories or less per serving
- High - 400 or more calories per serving
- First check the calories and then check the nutrients to see what you will be getting from the foods you are eating.

Sodium

- Important to look for less sodium (<5% is low, and >20% is high) in order to reduce the risk of high blood pressure.
- Snack items should have no more than 200mg of sodium per serving.



Nutrition Facts

Serving Size: 1 (1 cup, 30 grams)

Amount Per Serving

Calories 110	Calories from Fat 18
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 12g	3%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 210mg	9%
Total Carbohydrate 22g	7%
Dietary Fiber 3g	12%
Sugars 1g	
Protein 3g	6%
Calcium	
Iron	

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram:
Fat 8 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

Fats

- Look for foods low in saturated and trans fat, and cholesterol. Most fats should be poly or monounsaturated.
- Food should have no more than 35% of its calories from fat and no more than 10% of its calories from saturated fat excluding nuts, seeds, peanut butter, and other nut butters.
- All foods should have less than 0.5g of trans fat. Foods without trans fats are ideal.

Sugars

- Look for foods low in added sugars. Read the ingredient list and make sure that sugar is not one of the first three items on the list.
- Names for added sugars include: sucrose, glucose, high fructose corn syrup, corn syrup, maple syrup, molasses, and fructose.
- A food should have no more than 35% of its calories from total sugars.

Food Label Samples

Fats Label Calculations (http://www.coheso.com/nutridata)

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size: 1 (1 wiener, 45 grams)

Amount Per Serving

Calories 130 — Calories from Fat 108

	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 12g	18%
Saturated Fat 4g	20%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 35g	12%
Sodium 540g	23%
Total Carbohydrate 1g	0%
Dietary Fiber	
Sugars 1g	
Protein 5g	10%

Calcium

Iron

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram:
Fat 8 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

Hot Dog

Calculating the percentage of calories from fat (requirement <35%)

Take the calories from fat and divide by calories

108/130 = 83%

Note: If calories from fat is not listed, you can determine the calories by multiplying the total fat by 9 (1 gram of fat = 9 calories).

This item would NOT qualify.

Calories from fat and divide by calories = % of calories from fat.

Deli Chicken Breast

Calculating the percentage of calories from fat (requirement <35%)

Take the calories from fat and divide by calories

9/50 = 18%

Note: If calories from fat is not listed, you can determine the calories by multiplying the total fat by 9 (1 gram of fat = 9 calories).

This item would qualify.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size: 1 (2 oz, 56 grams)

Amount Per Serving

Calories 50 — Calories from Fat 9

	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 1g	2%
Saturated Fat 1g	3%
Trans Fat	
Cholesterol 25mg	8%
Sodium 470mg	20%
Total Carbohydrate 1g	0%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 0g	
Protein 9g	18%

Calcium

Iron

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram:
Fat 8 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

Food Label Samples
Sugar Label Calculations

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size: 1 (1 bar, 44 grams)

Amount Per Serving

Calories 160 — Calories from Fat 27

	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 3g	5%
Saturated Fat 1g	3%
Trans Fat	
Cholesterol	
Sodium 115mg	5%
Total Carbohydrate 32g	11%
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%
Sugars 19g	
Protein 2g	4%

Calcium

Iron

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram: Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

Cereal Bar ✗

Amount of sugar
(requirement <35% of calories)

Take the sugars and multiply by 4, then divide by calories (1 gram = 4 calories)

(19g x 4)/160 = 47.5%

This item would NOT meet the sugar requirement.

This item would **NOT** qualify.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size: 1 (1 cup, 30 grams)

Amount Per Serving

Calories 110 — Calories from Fat 18

	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 2g	3%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0g	0%
Sodium 210mg	9%
Total Carbohydrate 22g	7%
Dietary Fiber 3g	12%
Sugars 1g	
Protein 3g	6%

Calcium

Iron

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram: Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

Whole Grain Cereal ✓

Amount of sugar
(requirement <35% of calories)

Take the sugars and multiply by 4, then divide by calories (1 gram = 4 calories)

(4g x 4)/120 = 13%

This item would meet the sugar requirements.

Try this Simple Alternative:

Read the ingredient list and choose items that do not have sugars listed as the first or second ingredients, or have several listed.

How to identify sugars on the label:

- sugar
- sucrose
- glucose
- fructose
- high fructose corn syrup
- corn syrup
- maple syrup
- molasses

Did You Know ?

4 grams of sugar = 1 teaspoon